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CONTACT: Terri R. Reishus; 719-290-9855 cell; terri.reishus@pnmresources.com

PNM warns of phone scams targeting PNM customers this holiday season

Persistent scammers threaten to shut off power unless customers pay

(ALBUQUERQUE, NM) – PNM is warning customers throughout New Mexico to be on the lookout for phone scams during the weeks leading up to the holidays. PNM is receiving reports that scammers are adding a false PNM caller ID or are adding a false 505 prefix on their phone number to get you to answer, duping you into thinking it is legitimate. Once they have you on the phone, the scammer claims to be with PNM, claims you are behind on your bill, and threatens to disconnect your electricity unless you pay within an hour with a pre-paid card or electronic banking transfer.

More than 1,900 scam reports have been reported to PNM just this year. Scammers usually demand between \$200-\$500 for residential customers and more than \$1000 for business customers with 91 percent of customers saying they were contacted by scammers over the phone versus an alternative way such as in-person or via email.



Spikes in scam reports often occur during the holidays when more people are at home and are dependent on electricity while cooking Christmas or other holiday meals. Scam reports show that customers went against their better judgement, reacted out of fear, and overlooked the red flags of the scam explaining they were afraid to be without power over the holidays.

Don't be a victim, what to watch for:



- Scammer has a caller ID that reads PNM or will add a 505-prefix attempting to localize it
- Scammer may know your name, address, and will claim you are past-due on your PNM bill
- Scammer will claim a technician is on their way to disconnect your power within 1-hour
- Scammer will demand you pay over the phone to prevent power from being disconnected
- Scammer only takes payment over the phone via a pre-paid card, gift card, or electronic transfer
- If the caller is calling at odd hours, the weekend, or on a holiday, it's a scam.

What you should do if you receive a call from a suspected scammer:

- **Initiate the call yourself.** Firmly tell them you will contact PNM directly using the number on your bill, which is 888-DIAL-PNM (888-342-5766) or chat with us at PNM.com.
- **Don't take the claims as truth.** Check your own PNM bill to verify your balance by logging onto your PNM.com account and check if there is a disconnect notice on your bill. You may also text PNM by sending #BAL to 78766 to immediately get your account balance.
- **Check the clock and calendar.** Scammers often call outside of business hours or on the holidays, making it harder for you to verify and causing you to bypass red flags by reacting out of fear. PNM **does not** shut off power over the weekend or on holidays and never disconnects power without providing written notice in advance.
- **Never give banking information over the phone unless you initiate the call** to a number you know is legitimate, even if the caller insists you have a past-due bill, or your electricity will be shut off. PNM **does not** demand banking information by email or phone and will not force you to pay by phone as your *only* option.
- **If the caller demands payment by a pre-paid card, gift card, or wiring money, it is a scam.** Legitimate companies don't demand payment by cash reload cards (like MoneyPak, Vanilla, or Reloadit), gift cards (like iTunes or Amazon), electronic bank transfer (like Zelle) or cryptocurrency (like Bitcoin).
- **Listen to your instincts.** If the caller is convincing but threatening, then simply hang up and initiate contact with PNM yourself.
- **Report the scam.** Immediately report all details of the scam, or attempted scam, to PNM at [PNM.com/scams](https://www.pnm.com/scams) and to the FBI at [IC3.gov](https://www.ic3.gov). PNM uses the details of your report to help spread awareness of new scams and the FBI collects the details through their Internet Crime Complaint (IC3) because these fraudsters are using VoIP

telecommunication phone lines to scam customers out of money, which is a federal crime.

With headquarters in Albuquerque, PNM is the largest electricity provider in New Mexico, serving more than 530,000 customers in dozens of communities across the state. PNM strives to create enduring value for customers, communities and shareholders built on a foundation of Environmental, Social and Governance Principles. At the core of our business, we are focused on our vision of creating a clean and bright energy future, our purpose of working together with our customers and community to serve their energy needs, and our values of safety, caring, and integrity. Visit [PNM.com](https://www.pnm.com) for more information.

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